Indiana Traffic Safety Facts 2004

Speeding

http://www.in.gov/cji

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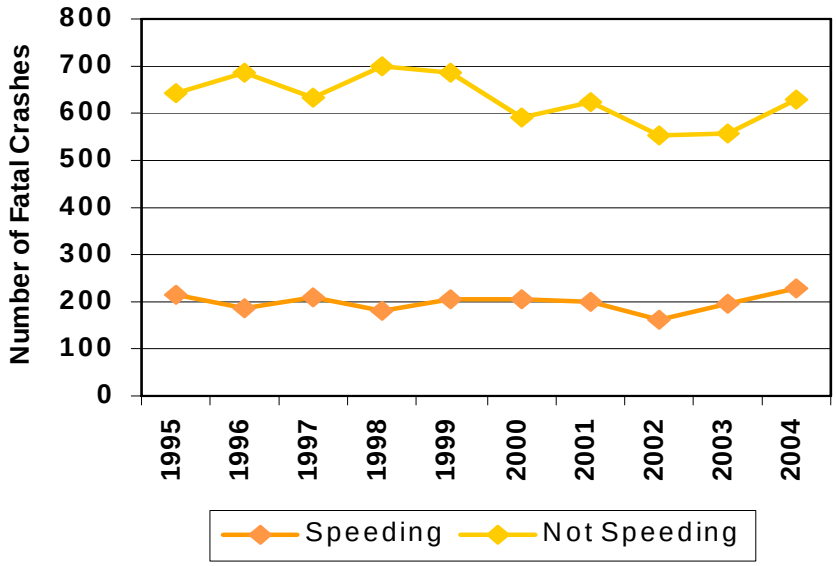
Indiana's economic cost of speeding-related crashes is estimated to be $250 million each year.

The definition of a speeding-related crash is when the driver was charged with a speeding-related offense or if an officer indicates that racing, driving too fast for conditions, or exceeding the posted speed limit was a contributing factor in the crash.

Speeding is one of the most prevalent factors contributing to traffic crashes. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has determined that the economic cost to society due to speeding-related crashes is estimated to be $40.4 billion per year nationwide. For Indiana, the losses total an estimated $250 million annually, or an estimated $685,000 every day. Nationally, in 2004, speeding was found to be a contributing factor in 30 percent of all fatal crashes and resulted in the loss of 13,192 lives. In Indiana, while the percent of the fatal crashes that involved speeding in 2004 did not change from 2003 (26 percent), the number of speeding-related fatalities increased by 50 to 267 deaths from 2003, a 23 percent increase from 2003.

Speeding reduces the driver's ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the roadway, extends the distance necessary to stop a vehicle, and increases the distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts to a dangerous situation. Speeding-related crashes in Indiana were at a ten year high in 2004.

Figure 1. Fatal Crashes in Indiana by Speeding Status, 1995-2004



It is estimated that speeding caused an additional 50 lives to be lost in 2004 versus 2003 in Indiana.

While Indiana has made substantial improvements in safety belt usage rates and impaired drivers, the number of speed-related fatal crashes has not changed over the past decade.

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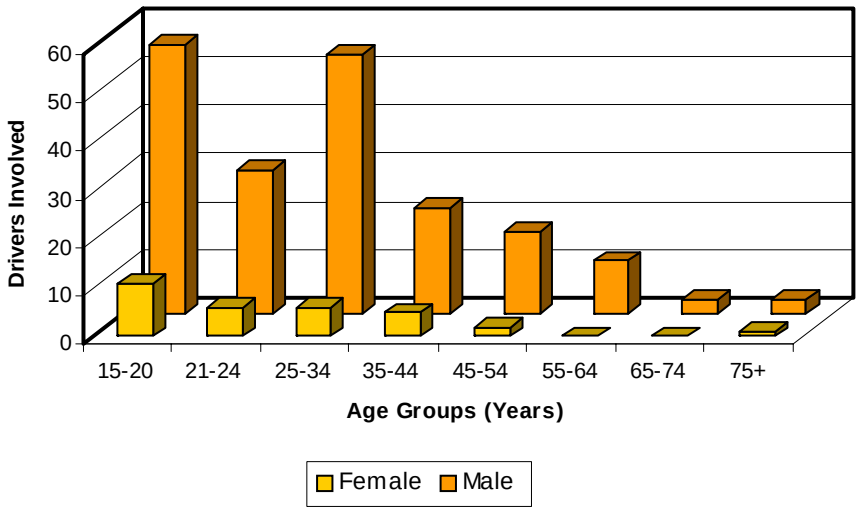
For drivers involved in fatal crashes, young males are the most likely to be speeding. Nationally, the relative proportion of speeding-related crashes to all crashes decreases with increasing driver age. In Indiana during 2004, 28.6 percent (56 of 196) of male drivers 15 to 20 years old who were involved in fatal crashes were speeding at the time of the crash, substantially lower than the national rate of 38 percent for that age group.

In 2004, 29 percent of male drivers 15–20 years old involved in fatal crashes were speeding.

Figure 2. Indiana Speeding Drivers in Fatal Crashes by Age and Gender, 2004



In 2004, 23 percent of speeding drivers involved in a fatal crash did not have a valid license.

In Indiana, only 39 percent of **speeding** drivers in 2004 under 21 years of age who were involved in fatal crashes were wearing their safety belt (where safety belt usage was known). In contrast, 60 percent (71 of 118) of **nonspeeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes in the same age group were restrained. For drivers 21 years and older, 46 percent of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes were using restraints at the time of the crash. Seventy percent of female drivers involved in speeding-related fatal crashes were restrained compared to males at only 48 percent. Among **nonspeeding** drivers in fatal crashes, 67 percent of all drivers were restrained with female drivers more likely to be restrained than males at 77 percent and 63 percent, respectively.

In 2004, 23 percent of **speeding** drivers in Indiana involved in fatal crashes had an invalid license at the time of the crash, versus 11 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers. This compares very closely to the national numbers of 21 percent and 10 percent, respectively. However, the 23 percent represents a slight decrease from 25 percent of the speeding/drivers with invalid licenses in 2003.

Speeding was a factor in 25 percent (161 of 658) of Indiana fatal crashes that occurred on dry roads in 2004, and in 24 percent (43 of 144) of those that occurred on wet roads. Likewise, excessive speeding was a factor in 39 percent (14 of 33) of the fatal crashes that occurred when there was snow or slush on the road and in 44 percent (8 of 18) of the fatal crashes on icy roads. Again, the definition of speeding includes both exceeding the speed limits and, in the officer's judgment, that the speed was too fast for the road conditions.

In 50 percent (3 of 6) of the fatal Indiana crashes that occurred in construction/maintenance zones in 2004, speed was cited as a contributing factor. This represents a change from 2 of 6 crashes in 2003.

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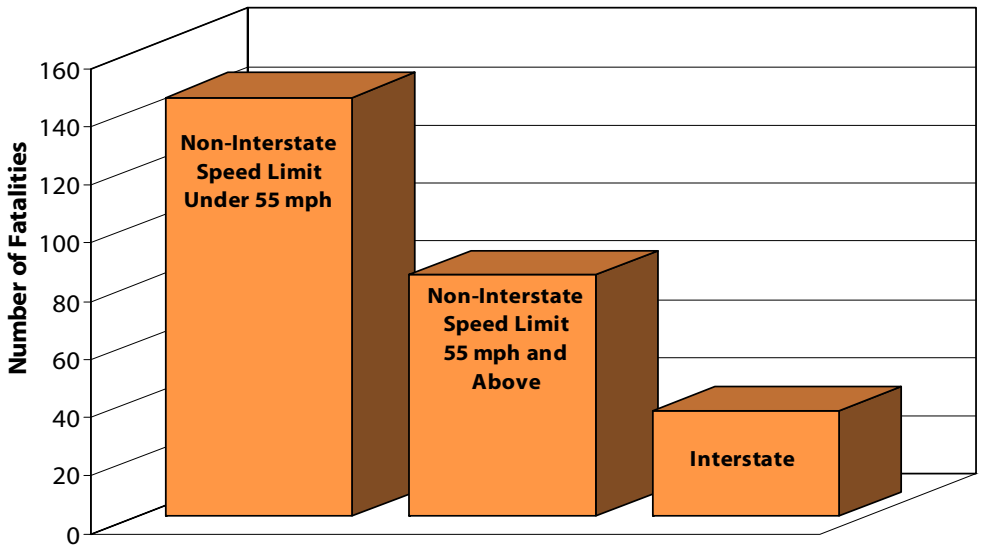
Figure 3. Speeding-Related Fatalities in Indiana by Road Type, 2004



In 2004, 86 percent of speeding-related fatalities in Indiana occurred on roads that were not Interstate highways.

Higher posted speed limits do not necessarily yield a higher number of speeding-related fatal crashes. In 2004, 54.8 percent (144 of 263) of the speeding-related fatalities occurred on roads having a speed limit of 55 mph or lower.

Motorcycle drivers were found to be speeding in 29 percent (29 of 99) of the fatal crashes. Of the speeding motorcycle drivers, 69 percent (20 of 29) were not wearing helmets at the time of the crash compared to helmet use of all motorcycle drivers in fatal crashes.

Figure 4. Speeding Restraint Use Among Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Vehicle Type, 2004, in Indiana

Among all drivers in fatal crashes in 2004, those who were not speeding were much more likely to be wearing safety belts than those who were speeding.

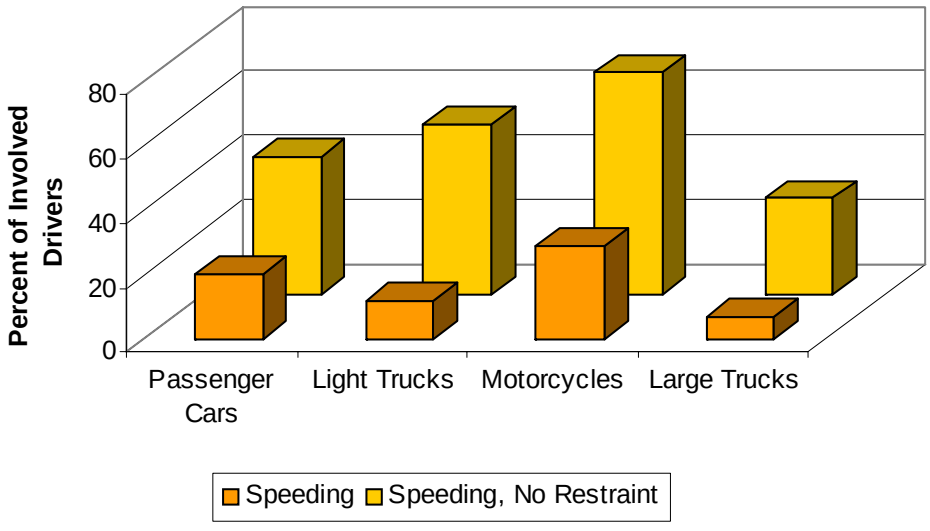


Table 1. Speeding-Related Traffic Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit, 2004

County	Total Traffic Fatalities	Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit								
		Total	Interstate		Non-Interstate					
			>55 mph	<=55 mph	55 mph	50 mph	45 mph	40 mph	35 mph	<35 mph
Adams	7	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allen	31	5	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0
Bartholomew	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Benton	1	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blackford	2	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boone	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Brown	12	9	*	*	1	6	1	1	0	0
Carroll	4	2	*	*	2	0	0	0	0	0
Cass	7	2	*	*	2	0	0	0	0	0
Clark	13	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Clay	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clinton	13	3	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
Crawford	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Daviess	6	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dearborn	9	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Decatur	5	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
DeKalb	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delaware	14	4	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
Dubois	11	5	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	0
Elkhard	29	10	0	0	2	2	4	1	1	0
Fayette	5	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Floyd	9	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
Fountain	7	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Franklin	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fulton	2	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gibson	5	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Grant	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Greene	4	1	*	*	0	0	0	1	0	0
Hamilton	20	4	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1
Hancock	8	4	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
Harrison	8	5	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0
Hendricks	12	4	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0
Henry	10	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Howard	11	3	*	*	0	3	0	0	0	0
Huntington	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	13	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
Jasper	9	5	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Jay	3	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jefferson	5	1	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	1
Jennings	7	2	*	*	2	0	0	0	0	0
Johnson	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Knox	5	1	*	*	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kociusko	17	6	*	*	2	0	1	0	2	1
LaGrange	12	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lake	58	27	1	8	1	0	2	2	5	8

Table 1. Speeding-Related Traffic Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit, 2004 (continued)

County	Total Traffic Fatalities	Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit								
			Interstate		Non-Interstate					
		Total	>55 mph	<=55 mph	55 mph	50 mph	45 mph	40 mph	35 mph	<35 mph
LaPorte	30	6	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	0
Lawrence	7	4	*	*	0	0	0	0	2	1
Madison	21	8	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Marion	96	30	3	8	0	0	3	6	5	5
Marshall	11	4	*	*	2	0	1	0	0	0
Martin	3	1	*	*	0	0	1	0	0	0
Miami	11	2	*	*	2	0	0	0	0	0
Monroe	12	2	*	*	0	0	0	1	0	1
Montgomery	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morgan	12	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Newton	7	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Noble	11	1	*	*	1	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio	1	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Orange	5	4	*	*	4	0	0	0	0	0
Owen	13	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parke	2	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perry	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pike	1	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Porter	32	10	0	4	2	0	0	0	1	3
Posey	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pulaski	4	1	*	*	1	0	0	0	0	0
Putnam	6	4	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
Randolph	3	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ripley	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rush	4	1	*	*	1	0	0	0	0	0
Saint Joseph	24	9	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	5
Scott	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shelby	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Starke	8	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Steuben	6	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Sullivan	2	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Switzerland	6	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tippecanoe	20	7	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	1
Tipton	5	3	*	*	2	0	0	0	0	1
Union	1	0	*	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vanderburgh	18	5	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
Vermillion	6	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Vigo	22	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	8
Wabash	7	3	*	*	2	0	0	0	0	0
Warren	3	1	*	*	1	0	0	0	0	0
Warrick	5	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Washington	7	3	*	*	0	0	3	0	0	0
Wayne	7	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wells	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	7	4	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	1
Whitley	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**947**	**267**	**15**	**21**	**83**	**17**	**30**	**23**	**26**	**48**

*County does not have an Interstate.

In Figure 4, passenger car drivers were found to be speeding in 20 percent of the fatal crashes in Indiana. Of that 20 percent, 43 percent of the drivers were unrestrained. This represents no change from the 43 percent unrestrained in 2003.

Conclusion

Speeding, especially driving too fast for conditions, is a major contributing factor in fatal crashes. Driving in excess of the speed limit is more prevalent among younger male drivers age 15–20. Moreover, those who speed also tend to not wear safety restraints. These two risk-taking behaviors, when combined, increase the likelihood of serious injury or death in a crash. The number of fatal crashes over the past 10 years that involved speeding has been increasing with 2004 being the highest in the past ten years. Between the years 1995–2000, speeding was a factor in 23 percent of fatal crashes. This percent has increased to 26 percent in 2003, and remained that level in 2004. Also, it is interesting to note that only a small percent (14 percent) of these crashes occur on Interstates. Although the total number of fatal crashes that occur in adverse weather conditions (snow-covered or icy roads) is low, driving too fast for conditions is clearly a primary contributing circumstance. Keeping drivers at or below the posted speed limits would help reduce the number of traffic-related fatalities in Indiana. Moreover, reinforcing the need to wear safety restraints, regardless of the roadway type, road conditions, trip length, or vehicle type, will save countless lives and prevent numerous unnecessary injuries each year.

This publication was prepared on behalf of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute by Purdue University's Center for the Advancement of Transportation Safety. All information contained within was gathered from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) Web-Based Encyclopedia provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) available at http://www.fars.nhtsa.dot.gov. All figures are considered current as of December 2005. Please direct any questions concerning data in this document to the Center for the Advancement of Transportation Safety, Purdue University, Potter Engineering Center, Room 322, 500 Central Drive, West Lafayette, IN, 47907-2022.